

## Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 BRUSSE 02849 231844Z  
ACTION SNM-02

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 DEAE-00 TRSE-00 L-03  
JUSE-00 /031 W

-----240542Z 060359 /11

R 231734Z MAR 77  
FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9396  
INFO USMISSION GENEVA

UNCLAS BRUSSELS 02849

E.O. 11652:N/A  
TAGS:SNAR,BE  
SUBJECT: CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS ON DECRIMINALIZATION OF MARIJUANA

REF: STATE 057902

1.TO AVOID PROBLEMS OF CONFLICTING SCIENTIFIC OPINIONS,BELGIAN  
LAW MAKES NO DISTINCTIO BETWEEN SOFT AND HARD DRUGS.MARIJUANA  
IS LISTED AMONG DRUGS " CAPABLE OF CREATING A DEPENDENCE," THE  
ABUSE OF WHICH IS PUNISHABLE BY IMPRISONMENT FOR 3-5 YEARS AND/OR  
A FINE OF 100-10,000 BELGIAN FRANCE (ROUGHLY DOLS 25- DOLS 250).  
MUCH STIFFER PENALTIES (10-15 YEARS FORCED LABOR)MAY BE IMPOSED  
WHERE THE OFFENSE INVOLVES PERSONS UNDER 16 YEARS OF AGE,OR WHERE  
THE OFFENDER WAS PART OF A GROUP INVOLVED IN TRAFFICKING THE SUB-  
STANCE. WHERE THE OFFENDER IS LEADER OF SUCH A GROUP,THE PEANLTY  
MAY BE 15-20 YEARS FORCED LABOR.

2.MARIJUANA POSSESSION - BOTH FOR PERSONAL USE AND FOR TRAFFICKING-  
IS SUBJECT TO THE FOREGOING PROVISIONS OF THE JULY 9, 1975 LAW.IN  
FACT,THE LAW IS RATHER LENIENTLY APPLIED.CASUAL AND ACCASIONAL USERS  
ARE DEALT WITH ON A CASE-BY-CASE BASIS,WIDE DISCRETION RESTING  
WITH THE PROCUREUR AND THE JUDGE.THE APPROACH IS HUMANE,DIAGNOSTIC.  
SOCIOLOGICAL HISTORY,ATTITUDE,THE RESULTS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTING,  
ARE ALL TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT.THE PROCUREUR MAY SIMPLY TERMINATE A  
CASE WITHOUT PROSECUTION- PSSIBLY WITH A WARNING- IF HE FEELS THE  
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PAGE 02 BRUSSE 02849 231844Z

CIRCUMSTANCE OF THE CASE WARRANT.AN HABITUAL USER MAY RECEIVE A  
3-4 MONTH SENTENCE.ADULT USE INVOLVING MINORS UNDER AGE 16  
WOULD RECEIVE A HEAVIER SENTENCE,PERHAPS A YEAR.CONVICTED  
TRAFFICKERS IN MARIJUANA HAVE RECEIVED UP TO 3 YEARS.  
RENNER

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## Message Attributes

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**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** LAW, MARIJUANA, US CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS  
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**Copy:** SINGLE  
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